Rec'd March
C. H. de.

Danville Jan 20th 38.

Soc of Inquiry Princ. Theo. Sem

Dear Brethren

Your fra-
ternal recognition of our existence, and kindly greeting has not been before responded to - from the fact, that we had not upon the receipt of it, reorganized our society of inquiry - During the preceding session, we had been endeavoring to accomplish the objects of a society of missionary enquiry, and a Rhetorical society, under one organization - upon a plan suggested by the faculty. But finding this too complicated - To be practicable - The faculty have instituted Rhetorical exercises as forming a part of the regular duties of the seminary. And these exercises take place upon Saturday, the day which we had hitherto devoted to our missionary meetings. So that we find great difficulty in securing the time for attention to missions - which their high importance and their adequate consideration demands. Having understood that it was usual elsewhere to devote one day in each month to the exclusive consideration of Foreign and domestic missions; and whatever else properly belongs to a society of religious inquiry. We requested the faculty to remit their lectures, upon the first Mondays in each month, for the purpose above stated - But owing to the shortness of our session, they did not think it compatible with their duty - and our interests to grant our request We have therefore concluded to devote one evening in the month to inquiries into the condition of missions &c and the private

business of the society. and the evening of the first monday in every month. to a meeting to which the Citizens. of the village are invited - and at which. an address shall be delivered. essays and reports read. upon the general subjects of missions - As to the religious condition of the village and its Neighborhood. The town itself through the instrumentality of four or five faithful pastors. with as many large and well conducted Sabbath Schools. presents no field of labor for our Students But. there is a large region of country - lying within five or six miles of the town. which is in a most deplorable condition both as to its entire destitution - of religious instruction. and ordinary secular education -. Our Sabbaths are so much occupied with religious duties at the Seminary - Conference &c at which the professors insist upon our attendance. that there is very little time afforded. for labors among them - But one or more of the students spend among from each sabbath. those more advanced in their course-preaching - and the remainder in Sabbath School instruction -

In connection. with our society. we have established a reading room and. have already received. a number of the leading religious periodicals of the day - We would be obliged to you if you would send us in your next communication. a list of some of the most valuable quarterlies which you take. as we are anxious to procure several more -

We are desirous to open a correspondence with some of our foreign missionaries. and as we have none of our own Alumni as yet in that field, any information as to the manner in which your correspondence is conducted. would be most thankfully received. I suppose Bro Barnes has scarcely yet reached

his destination, We feel here in Danville that although he was a graduate of your institution, to have a higher claim to him, as having here completed his collegiate course, and here first consecrated himself to that Saviour whose love he has gone to proclaim to the benighted sons of Africa. And many prayers daily ascend to heaven in his behalf from those who knew and loved while amongst us - God grant that his example may animate and stir up more of us to consider our duty to the heathen - Out of about forty students who are in attendance here there is but one who has the foreign field definitely in view at present - But I trust that when we have more information - and the relative importance of the foreign field is more fairly set before the minds of our students - (which we hope to accomplish by this society) that there will be a stronger interest felt upon this subject -

We heard from some source that Bro. Buckner who is a graduate of the college here - and a member of one of the Churches in the place had determined to go to the heathen - at the conclusion of the present session - Oh; that the God of all grace, would grant us more of that spirit of missions which animated his early disciples. when in compliance with their divine commission - they preached the Gospel to all nations baptising them in his name - Praying that God may bless you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus - and that your institution may continue to be that source of blessings to the Church - which it has hitherto been - and that continually increasing numbers of those who shall go forth in the power of God to preach the everlasting gospel - may issue from her walls

We remain your Truly

C W Rice in behalf of the Society